

Gideon

& other poems

Jeremy James

“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”

- Proverbs 25:11

1. Gideon

After he tore down
the grove
– with its demon hoard –
the ox himself was offered
on the altar
of the LORD.

2. Peter

Even though you saw
beyond the Law
and stood on the Mount
you were prone to withdraw
until Paul paid a call
and seasoned your flesh
with his jaw.

3. Nicodemus

To the manor born,
he came by night
to see how this
singular man
had set
the whole world alight.

4. Martha

O beautiful, dutiful child,
So greatly admired!
One of the few who knew
what He would do
on the Last Day,
when all who are saved
will be raised
from the grave.

5. Joseph

No camel hair here.
Just the sweetest fleece
for his little boy,
his pride and joy,
whose glorious hues
– the stuff of dreams –
served only to harden the news.

6. Ark

Summoned by her humble flight,
one tangible token was all it took
to make the eight shake
with delight
and in her little leaf perceive
the promised renewal of life.

7. Gamaliel

Don't say you didn't know;
don't say you couldn't see
when every day a wave
of His patience and grace
poured over your lonely soul
and said
*Repent, dear one,
and follow Me.*

8. Ten Lepers

Just why this dude got gratitude
and came to say,
“Hey,
that was really cool of you!”
– while the other nine
were not inclined
to be so kind –
is really nothing new.

9. Saul

Afflicted by contradictions,
and pride as wide as
a crocodile's hide,
your unsightly demise
met the final design
of both the LORD on high
and the Philistine.

10. Lazarus

They came for miles to see
this startling inconsistency,
to touch his flesh and
hear his breath
and ask
*Who let you
step through death?*

11. Hailstones

Slain in Canaan,
they were greatly displeased
to have these
unexpected projectiles
dive from the sky
and claim their lives.

12. Four Lepers

If we die, we die,
they said
as they went from tent to tent,
accumulating lucre
and laughing,
before asking
what it all meant.

13. Cockerel

Though his song never changed
a notable performance
one morning
– unarranged –
left a man weeping bitterly
and wholly estranged.

14. Jabbok

A name-changing event,
a bout
we know little about,
apart from the fact
that it happened after dark
and a man crawled out.

15. Joshua's Stone

Somehow his words
got stuck in a rock,
an inscrutable witness
– stock still on a hill –
to their continuing fitness.

16. Rebekah

We blame her son
but she's the one
who thought it through,
who got him
to do something
that made his dad mad.

17. Shunammite

I never asked for a child,
she said,
and now he's dead.

But she didn't hesitate to hasten
to the seer, and was
– with seven sneezes –
reconciled.

18. Judas

How on earth did you hide
the darkness inside you,
the seed of unbelief,
the greed,
the simple willingness to kill?
Then suicide.

19. Pilate

If only he had listened to his wife,
or taken advice
and set aside the Satanic gang
and their vile harangue,
he might have exercised
his iron will
more wisely.

20. Mary Magdalene

Such a beautiful soul
and, behold,
seven demons!
We wince at the scene,
but God alone knows what we owe
and the price of our peace
– paid by Jesus.

21. Uriah

His termination was determined
when he wed,
for his darling found another bed
which led all the way
to the wall
where he bled.

22. Abigail

Just how she ended up
with an oaf
is hard to explain.
How many at her wedding said
It will never last?
Surely his surly name
gave him away?
Oh, who can understand
the human heart?

23. Simeon

All the years
you had to wait
to hold him
must have seemed but an hour
when his mum said,
“Here.”

24. Zebedee

Your wife went a little too far, I think,
when she sought the top spot
for your sons.
Maybe you were still at home
on your own, unaware
that she'd even dare
ask such a thing?

25. White Horse

He could have chosen
the great whirling wheels
of the cherubim
but picked instead
a means that we
could share with Him.

26. Ziklag

Hearts failing
before the flames
of a shameless invasion,
deprived of their wives
and little ones.
Lo, men of war wailing.

27. Bezaleel

His fingers were handpicked
by God
to cut and join and filigree
a golden antique tapestry
to stand in a sea of sand.

28. Five Thousand

A simple meal
without equal,
a single course
coursing with more
than any feast could afford.
A taste of Eden.

29. Stephen

You were the goad
that inflicted the pricks
that made him kick
ridiculously
until finally he fell
to the earth
and rebirth.

30. Rhoda

You probably told your story
over and over,
the constant knocking ignored
and a man left standing
at the door,
while those in prayer
said over and over
There's no-one there!

31. Refuge

Six cities set aside
to hide the cry
of an untimely demise,
where the slayer waits
hour by hour, day by day,
for the priest on high
to die.

32. Jeroboam

He put the lowest people
in high places
and made the least a priest,
who bowed before a golden calf
and gave the land
an epitaph that, sadly,
never ceased.

33. Solomon

She came a long way
to check him out
and brought the nicest of spices
to please the palate
from which
his pearls of wisdom dripped.

34. Bears

The pair emerged
from nowhere.
The forty-two hardly knew
what hit them
or why their
blasphemous jibe
was indescribably vile.

35. Nimrod

Why seek details of his deeds
when the pattern of his heart
reflects perfectly
the End Time crimes
and perfidy
of his breed?

18 October 2023

For further information visit www.zephaniah.eu

Copyright Jeremy James 2023